

"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR"

ALL THE YEAR ROUND

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A SILENT WITNESS.

BY EDMUND YATES.

AUTHOR OF "BLACK SHEEP," "CASTAWAY," "THE YELLOW FLAG," &c. &c.

BOOK II. CHAPTER V. PEACE.

ON the day after Lucy Dormer's funeral, Grace proposed that they should start for Germany. "You recollect," she said to her companion with a faint smile, "all the plans we used to make about visiting Paris together, and the hours we passed in discussing them, long after the other girls were asleep; what visionary milliners' bills we ran up; what theatres and operas we went to; and what wholesale destruction we caused amongst the hearts of the young marquises and counts of whom our society was to be composed. And now what has been the reality? My experience of Paris is confined to a sick room overlooking the courtyard of an hotel and to a certain portion of the Tuileries Gardens, where, like the prisoner of Chillon, I should think my constantly pacing feet must have worn a path; I am wearing the mourning which was made for me at poor uncle's death, and have not crossed the threshold of a single milliner's shop; the young counts and marquises are represented by Baptiste, the waiter, and Etienne, who brings up the wood; and the whole thing has turned out a mockery and a delusion."

"There's a chance for you now, dear," said Anne. "Your self-sacrifice is over so far as poor Lucy is concerned, and there is no reason why you should not see as much of Paris as you may wish. Madame Bavarde, the landlady, would act as your chaperon."

"And what would you do?" asked Grace.

"I would remain here," said Anne, "making preparations for our departure."

"You would not come with me to join in all the festivities?" asked Grace.

"Oh no," replied Anne quickly, with a look of terror in her face; "I must not be seen here or anywhere in public. Of course, in the quietude of Bonn it would not matter, but here in Paris there might be—some people who would recognise me, and that would be destruction."

Grace looked curiously at her friend. This was not the first time she had seen her entirely lose her self-possession at the idea of being seen and recognised by some persons, whose names she had never mentioned, to whose actions she had never alluded. It was very strange, Grace thought; but if Anne did not volunteer her confidences, it was not for her to seek them. Moreover, her pallor and tremulousness left no doubt of the reality of her hesitation, and so Grace said, consolingly, "There shall be no question of your being seen, dear, and I myself have not the spirits to attempt to enter into any gaiety. We will leave our explorations of Paris, and our fascinations of its inhabitants, for some happier days. You shake your head, Anne, as though you did not believe that such times were in store for us: the fact being that you are horribly upset and entirely out of sorts, your nerves are unstrung, and you are labouring under mental depression, which I take to be the reaction from severe excitement. I am sure that the best cure for that will be peace and quiet, such as you will find in my aunt's house. Not with her, perhaps, because she is fidgetty and hypochondriacal; but I shall take care to interpose between you, and shall hand you over to be dealt with by the professor, who is the

dearest old creature in the world, and whose very aspect is suggestive of a benign calm. You still shake your head?"

"I am something of a fatalist, I am afraid," said Anne, with a dreary smile; "and though I love to hear you talk of the peace that awaits us in your German home, I cannot get rid of the presentiment that, so far as I am concerned, it will not be of long duration. I only hope that the trouble which I cannot explain, but with which I fancy myself threatened, may not be reflected on you."

"I would willingly take my share of it, dear," said Grace, embracing her affectionately, "if by doing so I could relieve you; but it will be time enough to talk of it when it comes. To-morrow we will leave this place and commence our journey, but my idea is to travel very leisurely—we are not pressed for time—and I think that your strength will not be equal to much fatigue."

Grace had gauged her friend's condition with tolerable accuracy. Although her desire to get away from Paris—where, had she ventured into the streets, she would have run the chance of being encountered by her father, or, worse still, by the man who had a legal right to call himself her husband—had given to Anne Studley a kind of fictitious stamina, they had made but little progress on their journey before this utterly gave way; and Grace, whose intellect and power of will had been much strengthened, since she had been compelled to depend upon herself, saw that all her fears were about to be realised. At first Anne would not hear of any delay, but when Grace promised to avoid the great towns, and declared, what certainly had some foundation of truth, that she herself was anxious to take the opportunity of visiting the quaint old Belgian cities which lay almost in their road, Anne could make no objection. She knew, too, that there was no danger in the proposal. Brussels she had heard her father speak of as one of his haunts. There were gaiety, luxury, and society—all of which he loved; and, in a town of clubs and coteries, Captain Studley would find little difficulty in combining profitable business with his pleasure. But cathedrals and mediæval town-halls; belfries, and watch-towers; the masterpieces of Rubens and Van Eyck; the memorials of Alva and Artevelde, were not likely to rouse the faintest interest in his breast. So the two friends passed several days in exploring Ghent and Bruges, and Grace noticed

with delight that Anne, freed from the influence of terror, was daily regaining her health and spirits.

Journeying thus by slow degrees, and stopping on their route wherever they thought amusement or distraction was to be found, they arrived one bright afternoon at the little German town which was for some time to be their home. Anne was delighted with the first glimpse which she caught of its first appearance. Nestling in the valley, the dark towers of its ancient buildings and the green doors of its modern houses standing out in sharp relief against the snow, with which the streets were rendered dumb; the ladies, with their attendant cavaliers, well wrapped in furs, driving in elegant sleighs, the horses attached to which made music with their tinkling bells; the peasants in jackets and kittels of their own knitting; the dreamy-looking students, scorning any increase of clothing, and braving the rigours of the frost with open necks and uncovered hands—these sights were new and strange to Anne Studley, and aroused in her a pleasant interest such as she had not felt for many a long day. Their arrival had been expected; and Franz Eckhardt and Paul Fischer, two of the most studious and best regulated young men of the professor's flock, had been sent to meet them. Fully appreciative were the two students of the honour thus conferred upon them, and before the train had come to a standstill they were at the door of the *damen-coupé*, caps in hand, full of congratulations to Grace on her happy return, and of almost openly-expressed admiration of the friend who accompanied her. Selected for their staid bearing and their scholastic acquirements, the natural taste of these youths impelled them to give the preference to a calmer style of beauty, and to manners less capricious and exacting than those of Miss Middleham; and as they walked off from the station, after having seen the ladies safely despatched in a sleigh, it was evident, from the confidences exchanged between them, that both Franz and Paul had been struck by Anne Studley's saddened countenance, and tranquil demeanour.

"The little Engländerin is well enough, see'st thou," said Franz, the elder of the two, as he stopped to light his pipe. "There is much prettiness in her fair hair and blue eyes, but she is light and frivolous, and lacks the repose which her friend suggests."

"The newly-arrived one," said Paul, who had endeavoured by hard study to rid himself of a temperament which by nature was intensely romantic, and had not quite succeeded, "the newly-arrived one I should judge by her countenance to have undergone much suffering, and thus to have accomplished that self-purification which is only taught by sorrow. The other is conceited and satirical—more of the character usually ascribed by English romancists to their heroines; the newly-arrived one has a soul which one can see shining through the depths of her eyes."

"Thou speakest like the Ghost of Uhland," said Franz. "All the overpiling of mathematics and metaphysics which thou hast laid over the fire of romance, innate within thee, has been insufficient to extinguish it. It is a dangerous spark for thy peace of mind, so before again encountering the young ladies, let us try to quench it with a glass of beer at the *verein* hard by."

A proposal of this kind is never unacceptable to a German Bursch, however romantically he may be inclined, and with a nod of acquiescence, Paul accompanied his friend into the tavern. There, in a large room on the ground-floor, they found some dozen young fellows assembled. On the bare table stood many huge beer-glasses, the atmosphere was thick with tobacco-smoke; while the walls of the room were covered in every direction with excellent caricatures in crayon, many of them life-sized, of the members of the club. Both of our friends were represented, of course, but, oddly enough, both in one character—that of Faust. In the face of the old man, bent and grizzled, listening with uplifted hand to the roaring chorus of the students beneath his window, were to be found the bold and somewhat heavy features of Franz Eckhardt; in the delicate lineaments of the youth, who was kneeling to an unseen Gretchen, was to be found an unmistakable resemblance to Paul Fischer.

A shout of welcome greeted them as they entered, and before they were seated they received a dozen challenges to drink.

"We were talking of thee, Paul," said a tall fellow, whose somewhat sodden face was adorned with a couple of recent scars, and who, from his position at the end of the table, seemed to be regarded as the president of the society; "we were saying that since the day when thou wert prevented from throwing thyself into the

river, on account of the rejection of thy suit by the daughter of Jacob Groll the glover, it would seem as though thou hast been cured of thy love mania."

"Philemasium, in Aristænetus, told Emmusus that there was no cure for love melancholy, to be compared with hard and constant study," said another sentimentously. "That is the advice which our Paul is following; he sits at the feet of the ancient Sturm, instead of at those of a formosa puella, and, swearing by Minerva, has abandoned Venus."

"We will get Arnst to change the faces of the Faust," said a third. "Paul Fischer has lost his youth, and henceforth should be represented as the philosopher, while as for Franz —"

"Not so fast, not so fast," said Eckhardt, with a laugh, "I am here to answer for myself; but before you obliterate Arnst's rendering of Paul, in which character and features are alike accurately delineated, you must hear me. What should you say, brothers Burschen and Renowners, if I were to tell you that our Paul is still true to that character—that within the last half hour he has lost his heart, and is ready to commit any folly to prove his admiration."

This statement was met with loud shouts of "bravo!" mingled with cries of "her name!" Paul Fischer rose in protest, but his rising was the signal for indiscriminate yelling, some calling upon him to speak, others to sit down.

"Silentium!" roared the president, bringing his glass with great effect down upon the table. "No one should expect the young one to give the name of the lady with whom, according to Franz, he is so suddenly and so desperately smitten; nevertheless, that will not prevent us from drinking prosperity to the newly-born attachment. Paul, my son—prosit!" He rose to his feet, and, as he spoke, lifted the glass to his lips, and swallowed the contents. All the others did the same, uttering the same word.

Meanwhile, all unconscious of the honour thus done to them, the two English ladies had driven to the house in the Poppelsdorfer-Allee, on the steps of which the worthy professor, divested of his favourite schlaf-rock, and clad in a wondrous blue coat, which was only brought out on occasions of the highest festivity, stood bare-headed to receive them. His eyes glistened with delight behind his spectacles as the sleigh drove up, and as soon as

Grace alighted, he took both her hands into custody with his plump little fingers, and kissed her on each cheek with frank heartiness; he then turned to her companion, and was evidently quite taken aback by Anne's appearance. The letter which Grace had written from Paris to the Frau Professorin, had prepared the little German household for the advent of a person in a professedly superior position to that which poor Lucy Dormer had occupied; but, although Anne was dressed with particular plainness, the quality of her clothes being such as would be scorned by many a young lady's-maid, there was a high-bred look about her which could not be hidden, and an air of quiet suffering which could not fail to awake interest in a kindly sympathetic soul, such as tenanted the quaint and homely body of Professor Sturm. It was not possible that anyone with such an expression, the professor thought, could be employed in a menial occupation; and even if she were the servant of his young English ward, from him, whose sympathies were radical and expansive, she would be entitled to respectful recognition; so the professor offered his arm to assist Anne to alight from the sleigh, and courteously motioned her to precede him upstairs, to the room where Madame Sturm was waiting to receive them.

Speculation, as to the manner in which the Frau Professorin would receive her friend, had occupied Grace's thoughts a great deal during the journey, and occasioned her no small mental trouble. She knew her aunt to be narrow-minded and obstinate, a great stickler for caste, and resolutely opposed to favourable first impressions. Poor Lucy Dormer had been decidedly superior to the generality of her class; but that fact had had no weight on the Frau Professorin, who treated her with marked disdain, and had been accustomed to speak of her as "that young person." Grace knew Anne's sensitive spirit would recoil at anything like a sound of harshness, and she was more than anxious to discover the effect, which the manners and appearance of the new inmate of their household would have upon her aunt.

This information came speedily and satisfactorily. When Anne had been half-presented, half pointed out to the Frau Professorin as Mrs. Waller, by Grace; had answered a few questions; in her own quiet way had relieved Grace of her wraps, and arranged Mrs. Sturm's medicine bottle and glass, which were in a dangerous posi-

tion on the table, and had retired to unpack the boxes, the old lady took advantage of the opportunity to deliver her opinion about the new-comer.

"I like that Waller of yours," she said, with an emphatic sniff of approval, as soon as the door had closed behind Anne. "I am very quick at observing, and the way in which she saved that bottle and glass from falling, showed me that she has her head screwed on in the right place—a woman who, I should think, knew all about medicines and that kind of thing, and who will be a comfort to have in the house, and able to look after herself; not like that poor girl you took away with you, who was always ailing and moping, as though one invalid in the place was not enough at a time. Quite a superior kind of person, too; and that makes one difficulty of knowing what we shall do with her. We could never expect her to sit down in the kitchen and eat her meals with Lisbeth. No, as you say, my dear, of course not; especially as Lisbeth has a taste for blut-wurst, black-pudding, and onions, which Waller probably would not share; so I fancy it will be best for her to have her dinner in that little room which you make a sitting-room, next to the professor's study, and I will have the sewing-machine moved up there, so that she can take a turn at it when she is not particularly engaged for you; for when people have been in trouble they are apt to be idle and mournful, and there is nothing to make them forget their miseries like giving them plenty of work. By-the-way, you never found your friend, Tonics, who advertised for you to come to her?"

"No," said Grace, with a blush; "I imagine I was too late."

"Ah! I wish you had met Tonics, for I had a kind of feeling that she knew something about medicine, and that some good would come to me, after you had seen her. Fancy that Dormer girl dying though!"

"Yes, poor creature," said Grace, "she sickened soon after we started, and never had strength to make head against her illness."

"She was a weak thing at best," said the Frau Professorin, "and Lisbeth told me, after you had gone, that she never could get her to eat buttermilk-soup, and that she always left the cranberry sauce with her roast veal. Now Waller is a woman of a very different kind, and, if my judgment is right, will prove a treasure to you. Where did you pick her up?"

"The landlady at the Hotel de Lille, in Paris, recommended her," said Grace, speaking very quickly. "Her husband was known to them, and she had very good recommendations."

"I should think she would be a very great comfort indeed to me, when you are not requiring her services," said Madame Sturm. "She seems a sensible person, that I could trust to bring me my medicines at the proper hour, and be sure that she would never overdo the dose; and the truth is, my dear Grace, I begin to feel even more dependent on my medicines than I was before."

The truth was that Grace had noticed a considerable change in her aunt, since she made her hurried departure from Bonn. The tricks which she was constantly playing upon herself, by eagerly swallowing every new nostrum of which she heard, and the disinclination to take exercise, which had now grown into a positive inability, had told severely upon the old lady's constitution. In the course of a few days she had become thoroughly accustomed to, and dependent upon, Anne's kindly ministrations; and knowing how far the comfort of her friend was dependent upon the goodwill felt towards her by the Frau Professorin, Grace waived her claim as much as possible to Anne's society, and allowed her aunt to benefit by it. The conversations between the old invalid and the young girl, whose hopes had been wrecked so early in life, would have been curious and instructive had there been any bystander to listen to them. The past was but rarely touched upon. At the outset of their acquaintance Madame Sturm, urged, not more by feminine curiosity than by a real interest which Anne's kindness to her impelled her to feel in the fortunes of her new acquaintance, would ask her now and then about her family, the circumstances under which she had married, and the cause and manner of her husband's death. Anne replied to these inquiries calmly and in a general way, describing herself as an orphan who had married to secure a home, and who, upon the loss of her husband, was again cast upon her resources. The old lady accepted this story in good faith, and only occasionally recurred to it, her favourite topic of conversation being her niece's future. Grace would be of age in a twelve-month, and, as a great heiress, would naturally be called upon to quit the shelter of their humble roof, and take up her posi-

tion in the world of London. Who was to undertake the duties of adviser and chaperon to the young heiress, sorely puzzled the worthy Frau Professorin. Her weak state of health rendered it impossible that she should undertake the position, and as to giving it up to some one to be nominated by those lawyer-men, from whom Grace was in the habit of receiving periodical reports of what was happening to the property, the old lady declared it unlikely that a pair of musty old attorneys could have any knowledge of what was proper in such a matter. She did not hesitate to declare her own wish that Anne should have a voice in the affair, and having obtained from her favourite a declaration of her readiness to undertake the charge, professed her intention of seeing the notion carried through.

The relations between Grace Middleham and the friend of her school-days, notwithstanding that so much of Anne's time was taken up in attending to the Frau Professorin, remained as affectionate and as intimate as ever. The promise which Grace had given to trust her friend wholly and unreservedly, and never to question her as to any of the occurrences which had happened during the time they were parted, she had faithfully kept, and Anne Studley's life, from the time she quitted Chapone House, to the day when she entered poor Lucy Dormer's bed-room at the Hotel de Lille, was a sealed book to her friend. More than this, so particular was Grace to avoid even the slightest appearance of curiosity, that, finding as she did that Anne showed a strong disinclination to be told anything concerning the bank and its affairs; topics which, of course, formed the staple of the communications made from time to time to the young heiress by Messrs. Hillman and Hicks; she was quite satisfied to keep her confidences to herself. She could not tell Anne anything about the bank and its affairs, without alluding to Mr. Heath, and Mr. Heath was, as she instinctively felt, connected in some way or other with Anne's unhappy remembrances of home. This much Anne had learned, and Mr. Heath, and any matter in which his name must necessarily be involved, were henceforth tabooed subjects. What the mystery was, Grace, of course, knew not; but she could not believe that there could be anything in it personal to Mr. Heath, whom she knew her uncle had always highly valued, and of whom, for her uncle's sake, she entertained the highest

opinion; but out of kindly feeling for her friend she was content that there should be absolute silence on the point.

The constant attendance upon the Frau Professorin, whose desire for Anne's presence and ministrations became greater as her infirmities increased, and Grace's constantly-sought opportunities for her friend's society, absorbed so much of Anne's time as to give her but little chance for self-communing. The little German town stood out to her as a green spot, an oasis in the desert of life. Resting in it, she had gradually been enabled to overcome the dread of detection, the terror of pursuit, which had beset her immediately after her flight. Constantly occupied by her domestic duties, she had lost the habit of recalling those frightful scenes through which she had passed as in a dream, and a dull and confused memory of which still occasionally haunted her sleep. And upon Anne Studley, as upon so many other afflicted ones, the power of music exercised its blessed influence. Within a very short time after her arrival at Madame Sturm's, the question of her position in the household was satisfactorily settled. The old lady herself would not hear of her favourite being shut out from their better society; she was introduced to their guests as Miss Middleham's friend and companion, and when company was present—or better still, during the long evenings when they were alone—Anne would sit silent and motionless, rapt and entranced at the weird and mystic music, which flowed out from the piano under the quiet touch of the professor's melody-compelling fingers. All throughout the house was harmonious and tranquil, the Frau Professorin's querulous complaints were no longer heard, and under the shelter of her roof Anne Studley found a haven and passed a year of peace.

LEARNING TO COOK;*

A SUPPLEMENTARY LESSON.

It is a delight to leap back into school-days by sudden contact with fellow-boy, with fellow-girl; with tutor, governess, book, box, slate, toy, sum, sketch, theme. What vivid pleasure, consequently, came to some of the old pupils of the cooking-school, when they caught sight of a new advertisement, "Buckmaster's Cookery!"

"Charming! Charming!" Parisina

cried; running off into her peculiar ardour and eloquence. "I must read it! I must have another peep at that fierce little Mistress Tart, and that grand Mrs. Born, and that nice Mrs. Sweetman! Besides, I may now, really, learn something; and, since I have neither been useful nor ornamental all my life, grow, at last, to be a little bit of both!"

Parisina said a little more, too, about the visions that were conjured up before her. "I can see skimmers," she declared; "and salamanders, and flour-dredgers, and sauce-boats, and lemon-squeezers, and egg-whisks, and cutters, and rolling-pins, and marble paste-slabs! It is new life to me; or, rather, it is the return of the old life, after I had thought it was past and gone."

And after this enumeration, Mr. Buckmaster's book was energetically opened.

There was his list of kitchen-requirements, duly set down. A bain-marie was in one lengthy column, so was a purée presser, so were trussing-needles, larding-needles, oval tin-dishes for gratins, a brazing-pan, a mincing knife, a pestle and mortar, cylinder moulds for creams, six sieves, a thermometer, weights and scales, and a kitchen clock. The cost (roughly) was thirty-three pounds.

"Thirty-three pounds. Oh! Some items have yet to come, too, my sharp eyes tell me. There is a blank at, 'a thermometer in wire cage to measure up to five hundred degrees.' There is a blank at, 'one pie mould, selected according to convenience.' There is a blank at, 'eight or ten stewpans (various) with covers,' and a pretty filling-up that blank will ask for! And there is a blank at the brazing-pan, which is to be twelve inches by eight inches, and seven inches deep. Supposing we put the odd seven pounds to the thirty-three pounds, for these other things, and make it, roundly, forty pounds. Supposing, then, we make a pause to think of it, and show our amusement and amazement in an enjoying laugh. The idea!"

Modesta was at hand (being inseparable from Parisina) and tried for a little modification. "In the fine kitchen of a fine house all those things would be necessary, surely?" she suggested. "Wouldn't rich people want them? Or a baronet; or a baron; or an earl, a marquis, a duke, a prince? Anybody, in short, who lived in a castle, a hall, a tower, one of the best streets, or a Belgravia Mansion?"

"Undoubtedly they would!" exclaimed

* ALL THE YEAR ROUND, New Series, Nos. 301, 302, 303, 304, 306.

Parisina. "And there you have the whole absurdity. Is Mr. Buckmaster trying to teach the cooks who ask fifty pounds a year wages, a hundred pounds, two hundred, three hundred? Is Mr. Buckmaster hoping to enlighten their ladyships the mistresses of cooks, male and female, who enjoy such annual incomes? It is absurd, my dear. The cooks—as far as they are concerned—would scornfully treat Mr. Buckmaster to the whole of their minds; their ladyships, languidly, would ring the bell for Mr. Buckmaster to be carted clean away!"

The truth lay in this forcible exposition; contemptuous as it might be. In Francatelli, in Ude, in Soyer, in many cooking books of repute, there is every direction for the serving and ennobling the rich man's table; Mr. Buckmaster and his small Band of Sisters need not try to elbow themselves into a place amidst them. It is the middle-classes, the lower-classes, the very very poor, who are wanting instruction, and amongst whom Mr. Buckmaster says he is wishing to push his instructions; but he is losing his way fatally, in discoursing to these of dishes that want a paraphernalia costing forty pounds to make them. It is true the paraphernalia would only have to be procured once; but it is equally true that even forty pounds worth of kitchen implements would want a vast deal of supplementing. They would want crockery; they would want cutlery; they would want flannels, and cloths, and finer napery; they would want a kettle, a coal-scuttle, a toasting-fork, candle-box, salt-box, a score of things omitted by Mr. Buckmaster. They would want fire-irons, table, chairs. They would want, more especially, the fine foods and condiments that were the reason for their existence.

"Cookery," says Mr. Buckmaster, in his preface, "is the art of making every scrap of food yield the greatest amount of pleasure and nourishment of which it is capable." Mr. Buckmaster says well. So is he again quite true and good when he proceeds about the dinner of the working-man. He knows it may be "and often is, of odd scraps; but it may be so cooked as to be tender, savoury, and even turned into delicate morsels." Then he knows "how difficult it is to cook or do anything with the grates and appliances usually found in the houses of the poor. Their only resources are a dirty frying-pan during the week, and sage and onions and a baker's oven on Sunday." And Mr.

Buckmaster, being aware that "science has not yet produced a good economic fireplace suitable for the homes of the working classes," hopes that, "with improved dwellings for the working classes, such as I see on the Shaftesbury Estate, we shall have improved arrangements for warming and cooking, with plenty of pure air and water." "The best offering," he announces, in another place, "you can make the poor, is to instruct them in the art of cooking, and teach them what constitutes food." The quotation comes, "Blessed is he that feedeth the poor;" but, says Mr. Buckmaster, very properly, "still more blessed is he who teaches the poor to feed themselves." And he relates, of charitable ladies, "I have seen them on a cold winter's day, collecting scraps of cast-off vegetables at Covent Garden, amid the jeers and scoffs of vulgar well-dressed people. With these vegetables, and odd pieces often begged from houses, savoury and wholesome food has been prepared from materials which would otherwise have been trodden into mud." Mr. Buckmaster wants the poor to know "that from vegetables alone a wholesome, economic, and nourishing diet may often be prepared. Why," he asks, "are Haricot beans, peas, lentils, oatmeal, macaroni, Indian meal, and rice, not more used?" His own answer to his own question is, "Because people are ignorant of the value of these foods; and the art of making them savoury by cooking has yet to be learnt." He repeats, in a subsequent lecture, "Lentils, peas, and beans, are not so much used in England as on the Continent . . . yet . . . by a little careful cooking their raw uninviting flavour may be removed without impairing their nutritive value, and this"—it requires noting—"this is one of the problems for the Cookery School to solve."

Exactly. It is precisely the *raison d'être* of the Cookery School; it is precisely the position Mr. Buckmaster is expected to take; and in all of it there may be nearly perfect agreement with him. A little doubt may come as to whether the odd scraps composing a working man's dinner could, even with forty pounds worth of machinery, be metamorphosed into delicate morsels. The desirability, too, of introducing more largely into the poor man's diet, "peas, beans, lentils, and other leguminous plants," may be questioned, when the same are pronounced, with all the authority of book and lecture, to be very

indigestible. It is to be hoped also that Mr. Buckmaster has been misinformed when he sets down, "It is said that railway-contractors practically recognise the principle of food as an exponent of work, by discharging those labourers whose appetites fail." Are contractors in the habit of standing by their navvies at meals (or appointing assistants to do so), and of watching with what gusto the polony or the cow-heel will disappear? Are navvies, also, learning to practise deception, and to thrust sausages and so on, clown-wise, into big pockets or anywhere, rather than let a detective discover failing appetite? So is Mr. Buckmaster soaring off into the bewitching regions of impossibility when he declares, "The family dinner of every poor man ought to be a daily social elevating influence—a time when men exchange with their wives and children the courtesies of civilised life." "There is nothing," he maintains, "to prevent the poorest labourer striving for such a civilisation." If there is nothing, then is the labourer a very different individual to what he has been persistently pronouncing himself to be. Then is he— But let Parisina be heard over this. She is in loud excitement, panting for the opportunity.

"Dear me! dear me!" is her cry. "I do wish people would leave off being absurd! Nothing to prevent a labourer making his dinner a time for exchanging courtesies with his wife and children! Has Mr. Buckmaster ever seen a labourer at his dinner, I wonder? It is brought to him mostly in a yellow basin, tied up in a coloured pocket-handkerchief. He sits down on the road, or on a bench, or on bricks, or anywhere; and he has to eat it without even a table, within a stone's throw of his work. If a man has risen to the grades above a labourer, and so gets more wages, he buys something at the butcher's, and goes off to a very near coffee-shop or public-house to cook it; and he does cook it, and he sits down with a score more skilled workmen, and they do have a table and a manufactured seat, and there they 'pass the time-o'-day,' and have to be very sharp, for fear they overstay their dinner-hour. Why, with most working-men living a mile, two miles, from their 'shop' or job, with hosts of clerks farther off still from counting-house or office, how many married men of the lower classes can ever hope (except on Sundays) to be at home to dine?"

It is true. But, laying aside these little blemishes, it is excellent to find Mr. Buckmaster making such firm and steady approach to the ground where reform is wanted. Here it is, in full view. "What is now called cooking in the houses of the humbler middle and the working classes is little better than that of the Ancient Briton." This is slightly strong, possibly; for the lecturer's erudition leads him to announce that "the Ancient Briton lived chiefly on coarsely-bruised barley mixed with milk; sheep were unknown; meat was not much used, and was generally eaten raw; . . . man bruised or ground his food between stones called querns, . . . and with the paste or dough, formed by mixing the meal with water, he prepared an unleavened cake, which was baked in live ashes or in an oven." Ancient Briton is an error, most likely, for Anglo-Saxon; a race whose food, according to the same authority, "consisted of broth, barley-bread, with milk, butter, eggs, cheese, green vegetables, and bears;" a diet that, with the addition of tea and beer, is much nearer that in use by the poorer classes of to-day. It is so grateful, however, to be spared an allusion to King Alfred and his method of burning cakes (without His Majesty having had the chance of learning to cook), that no quibble shall be raised here about it, and Mr. Buckmaster's good intention shall be taken precisely as if his illustration had been left out. This good intention is brought to the front when he speaks of alcohol. "Alcohol," he says, "contains no flesh-forming principles, and can add nothing to the substance of the decaying tissues." It is not in the least hidden, either, over treacle. "Treacle, which is often used in the poorer families in place of butter, is, especially during the colder months of winter, a very inferior substitute for it." A sigh is heaved for these poor poor, driven from poor food to poorer, from bad cookery to worse. It cannot be helped; but there is glad anticipation of the good work the cooking-school is going to do, when it shall have caused all this to be altered, and its severities and horrors to be past. There comes no fear that the cooking-school is not going to alter it. Mr. Buckmaster is treading up to the goal so undeviatingly, we cannot but have confidence in him. His words are: "I know there are difficulties . . . for arrangements for regular instruction in cookery in every girls' school . . . but an earnest purpose overcomes everything;

. . . and, in this way, soups, stews, rice, macaroni, Indian meal, oatmeal, pea-meal, beans, lentils, and other foods scarcely known among the poor, might be introduced with advantage, and their prejudices gradually overcome." And these words are so clear, the purpose is so defined, entire faith is placed in what is being done, in what there is power to get done; that we turn the page hurriedly, to get at, and devour, the free straightforward scientific rules that are to be sown with generous hand: that are to be teaching everybody, near or far, how this good-doing is to be effected, and by what first simple steps it is to be begun.

Alas! what do we find? Where is this manner of cooking odd scraps tenderly and savourily, of making wholesome food of materials which would otherwise have been trodden into mud? A committee, a cooking-school, a batch of cooks, a lecturer, clerks, a superintendent, assistants, national attention, and a book, have all been called up for this; and where is it? Nowhere. It is positively and conspicuously absent. It seemed satisfactorily present on alighting on the dish kedgerree. A flavour of "cadger" pervaded the title, and made it welcomed with as much avidity as if it had been the shaft of a long-searched-for mine. It is placed, moreover, at the end of the Tenth Lecture, a Lecture on the Education of Girls, in which hard cold dumpling gets depressing scorn, in which bread and cheese are slighted, in which the refuse-collecting in Covent Garden is contrasted proudly with the acquirement of "the Greek of Porson, and the Geometry of Euclid." "I know how feeble words of mine are to alter the habits and prejudices of society," says Mr. Buckmaster, at the close of this lecture, with fine emotion, "or to promote any united action for good among those who are separated. To work, to hope, to love, and to pray—these are the things that make men happy. They have always had the power of doing this, and will have the power to the end of time, and whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might. The proper management of a household has always had a close fellowship with the best of virtues. The boiling of a potato may be dignified by the intelligence and the motive which inspire the doing of it, and there is no duty imposed on us so menial but may be done to a high purpose, and thereby ennobled by doing it." This is precisely as it stands (and is an admirable specimen of Mr.

Buckmaster's style), and as Kedgerree is the very next word to it, is not even over a leaf, has only the space of white paper before it necessary for clear printing, it surely was not too much to expect that kedgerree was the crown and outcome of it, the essence for which all the principles and axioms had been expressed.

Then what is kedgerree? "An excellent breakfast or luncheon dish." Half-a-pound of cold fish to be taken; three ounces of rice are to be washed, boiled, and drained; two eggs are to be cut into half-inch cubes; an ounce of butter is to be melted; pepper, salt, and cayenne, are to be added for seasoning; all are to be covered with bread raspings, and put to brown in an oven. Is it not wonderfully appropriate to the text, to the promises, to the overture, to the *mise-en-scène*? To match it, there is pease pudding. "It is a very sensible and nutritious dish for working people—served with fat pork" (the pork being the back-bone of it), flourishes Mr. Buckmaster. No doubt. How is it to be made? The peas called "marrowy melters" are humorously recommended (though, in the hard dry peas for a pudding, it could scarcely be thought that such a distinction could be assured), and they are to be beaten up with one or two eggs, and an ounce of sweet butter. How odd it is that instance must be made upon the impossibility of getting on without one or two eggs, and an ounce of sweet butter! It is precisely these eggs, it is precisely this butter, that the poor have to do without. To speak of these things as being within the reach of the poor, though not within their wisdom, is precisely on a par with the sense of the speech Mr. Buckmaster had the honour to make to the Queen.

"May it please your Majesty," the lecturer began, "the specimen of cooking which is now to be presented, takes only five minutes, and is within the reach of almost the poorest of your Majesty's subjects. The materials cost four-pence, and they furnish a savoury and nourishing dish . . . It is never found in the homes of the poor in this country."

Parisina was not to be kept back at the reading of this.

"An omelette never eaten by the poor in this country! No, poor souls, truly. An omelette costs four-pence, and is four-pence a sum that a poor man can afford? Is any thought given either to the solidity of an omelette, or to how much hunger an omelette would

abate? I suppose three omelettes would about satisfy a working man, with proper supplies of bread and vegetables; and it is too ridiculous. Besides, Mr. Buckmaster's directions are, under the heads 1, 2, 3, and so on, that an omelette is to be quickly cooked, that an omelette is to be eaten immediately; and, with a man away at his sawing, at his road-making, at his quarrying, at his hedging, his painting, his teaching, his bank, or his books, how is he to do his quick eating, and who is there near him authorised to cook?"

With these disadvantages then, these three dishes mentioned—pease pudding, omelette, kedgeroe—cannot be said, in any way, to be fulfilling the conditions required, or to be enforcing anything that had not been thoroughly well known before. Two other recipes shall be put on the file beside them. These are good; these do, at last, grasp the scrap question, and look in the face of it. They eventually become one though, and had better be reckoned at that number; for the first is the stock for soup, and the other is the soup made from the stock. Previously-cooked meat and bones are to be taken, however, in both cases; and though it is not said that the two carrots, the two turnips, the two onions, and the bouquet garni, to be added to these, are to be picked up in Covent Garden, there is no doubt that, if they were, they would answer the identical purpose, and their flavour would be the same. The inevitable ounce of butter is to be added; but, still, old scraps and bones do get honourable mention, and Mr. Buckmaster shall have the credit of it. After it, comes Poor Man's Soup; a soup of water, not stock; requiring only "one ounce of butter, or dripping, or skimmings of saucepans" (this last suggestion has the right ring in it), some onions, potatoes, parsley, flour, bread, salt, and pepper; and there are some dozen other recipes for vegetable soups, all of a certain cheapness, because there is no meat in them, and no stock made from meat. Nearly every one, however, has a bar-sinister across it, spoiling its escutcheon, and making it a broad fair target for any wandering aim. Let Spanish onion soup be set down as an example. It is all well as far as taking a shredded Spanish onion is concerned, and as far as taking an ounce of butter or dripping, some salt, and pepper, and bread, and flour; but then the directions are, to "add a milk or cream liaison," and a liaison

(the best way) is to be made of the yolk of an egg for every pint of soup, and of a quarter of a pint of cream, or half a pint of milk, for every yolk! Then let there be a glance at soup maigre. For it, two onions, or a quarter of a head of celery, a small carrot, and turnips (undefined quantity), are to be shredded, and stewed for twenty minutes in half an ounce of butter. This would seem to add a culinary problem to the financial one; at any rate, the finance question stands out prominently in the three-quarters of a pint of green peas that are to be "taken," and in the fresh quantity of the previous vegetables that are to be cut into wheels or stars with a vegetable-cutter. But these are soups, let it be remembered. Apart from them (it shall be repeated) there is not one single recipe for turning scraps into delicate morsels, for making a good dinner, in the French way, from what has hitherto been flung out into the gutter. To pop everything into a soup-kettle, and turn it out a liquid, has nothing of the *bonne bouche* incident about it, it must be insisted. The secret, too, of making very indigestible lentils, beans, Indian meal, and so on, savoury by some new art of cooking, is never once divulged. As might be expected, there is a place found for macaroni. Macaroni is to be boiled, is to be strained, is to be eaten. Good. But as much as that has been known for some time. There is more, though. Macaroni "without,"—i.e. macaroni just boiled and strained, with nothing else, is not "savoury." It wants milk, it wants sugar, it wants eggs (unless it is only for thickening soups). According to Mr. Buckmaster, it wants two ounces and a half of melted butter, pepper, salt, and a neat hillock of grated cheese, either Parmesan or Gruyère. And this is Mr. Buckmaster's system throughout. Dinners costing nothing but skill are wanted; scraps are to be made delicate, refuse is to be nice and nourishing; the School will do it; the School is instituted that it shall do it, and—Mr. Buckmaster teaches how to make (his index shall be followed, and alphabetically) Apple Charlotte, Brabant broth, Chickens à la Marengo, Duck braised, Eggs curried, Fowls marinaded, Grouse roasted, Hare jugged, Italian ices, Jardinière, Mullet baked, Omelettes soufflées, Pheasant salmi, Rissoles, Sole au gratin, Tomatoes à la Provençale, Veal fricandeau, and White-bait!

There are one or two more errors,

moreover, into which Mr. Buckmaster falls. He declares stoutly, without a falter, that "except the set dinner-party, which is often an opportunity for waste and extravagance, there is no such thing as regular, comfortable, inviting meals in the houses of the middle classes." This is simply monstrous, and so is this other piece of exaggeration. "The English, perhaps more than any other people, were once distinguished for their love of home. . . . But one cannot fail to observe the gradual loosening of all the cords which once held husbands and fathers to their homes. Thousands of married men go home every night by late trains; they prefer drinking and smoking and spending their evenings anywhere rather than with their families." Does Mr. Buckmaster recollect that London has stretched itself out lately into lengthy suburbs, these stretching again into suburbs of themselves; that husbands, poor men! must come home by late trains because business keeps them, and home is so ruinously far away? Husbands may have consolation in learning that Mr. Buckmaster announces himself to be unpopular. He speaks of "his disgust and contempt for men who try to make twenty per cent. out of dwellings for the labouring classes . . . who have run up dreary rows of houses . . . and at every corner erected a beer-shop;" and he says, proudly, "I have denounced them over and over again in the parish vestry, which is principally made up of enterprisers and publicans, until they all hate me." Do not the husbands think the hatred can be understood? If a man is to have a value in a vestry (or a cooking-school) he should take care that he has looked at his subject on every side of it, and obtained its accurate measurement, and, above all, he should not talk random nonsense. He should not say, "In this country it is common, after we have carefully extracted much of the flavour, gelatine, albumen, and fat, from turkeys, fowls, beef, legs of mutton, green peas, and bacon, to carefully throw away the water in which they have been boiled." He should not say, "A French peasant would live comfortably on what English people throw in the gutter." He should not say, "Many ladies, except the first lady in the land, never enter their kitchens." He should not say, "A servant of all-work generally begins life by wheeling for hours on the pavement a perambulator with two children, crying, or sucking vigorously at

the ends of india-rubber gas-tubing." He should not add, "At last she becomes the wife of a soldier or a bricklayer's labourer, and the one room called a home is a den of filth and misery, and with a baby in her arms she goes into the streets to sell lucifers." If Mr. Buckmaster will persist in throwing such fitful glares and shadows, he must expect hands held up against him, and the chairman declaring his motion lost. He must expect ironical laughter, too; and questions that will probe. In respect of Her Majesty's personal supervision of her cooks and scullions, for instance, it may be enquired of him which of those underlings was it who told him it was her gracious custom. Failing this back-stairs mode of knowledge, did Mr. Buckmaster acquire it from the queenly lips themselves? In respect of the gas-tubing sucked by children (after fit acknowledgment, by laughter, of the excellence of the joke), there might come the question, Is it an unrighteous thing for servants to begin life by taking children out for an airing? It is, at all events, as useful an occupation as writing such books as this of Mr. Buckmaster's.

In respect of the French peasant's mode of living, it may be asked, is not Mr. Buckmaster referring to the pot-au-feu? Does he not order pot-au-feu to be made of six pounds of fresh beef; and does he mean to insinuate that English people make their gutters acquainted with that? From another side, too, might come a jeer about Mr. Buckmaster's experience of salads. He says, "the dressing is often served up in a twisted bottle, and the wet vegetables are heaped up on a dish, like food for cows." Mr. Buckmaster is singularly unfortunate. He is unaware of the financial advantage of the division of labour (making it cheaper to buy some things ready-made than to stop to make them), he is offended because a bottle is twisted; he has found people without skill enough to shred a lettuce. Then, in lighting a fire, he tells the cooks to take some crumpled-up paper or a letter. Now, does Mr. Buckmaster expect this to pass without protest? It is meant as a most smart lesson in economy; but most masters and mistresses would admit that it is full of danger. "Wash your hands, clean your nails, and read over slowly and thoughtfully the recipe," says the good gentleman again. It will not do. If this piece of flippancy is meant for a servant, it would make her toss her head; if it is meant

for a lady, it is equally impertinent. Then, says Mr. Buckmaster, "Why parsley is used" (for garnishing) "I cannot understand; it cannot be eaten, and before carving it is always removed." Alone, this will do very well. If Mr. Buckmaster cannot see the prettiness of parsley, that is his affair; but when he tells people to put a white-paper frill round the knuckle bone of a roast leg of mutton, what does he mean? There is no non-understanding, then, about the paper frill? That may be eaten? Ah, well, the subject shall be left, and we will pass on to take further note of Mr. Buckmaster's over-vigour of expression. He tells of perquisites. "No invention of the devil," he cries, "has been a more fruitful source of dishonesty and of waste, and mostly among servants." Now, the over-vigour is noticeable; it is sheer waste; but let the eye rest upon that "mostly." Can perquisites have a place, except among servants? Can a master take perquisites from himself? More unnecessary vigour is expended on the subject of the struggle for appearances. "Men are fortunately not possessed with this devil to the same extent as women," hammers out Mr. Buckmaster. It is equally unnecessary, in another way, for him to tell the ordinary English reader, as he does at page 63, that Ruth "was a young widow, living with her mother-in-law Naomi. These two came down to Bethlehem in the time of barley-harvest, and Ruth went to glean in the field which belonged to Boaz, &c., &c." Mr. Buckmaster may rest contented that these are incidents pretty generally known. It is not so well understood that there are such words as *osmazome*, *liaison*, *liquefy*, *soufflers*, and *ozidation*; popular spelling would put them differently; but as these are only marks of carelessness, they are only mentioned as a peg on which to hang the remark that scrupulous care is wanted in all recipes and directions; and that, as these errors have been lighted upon, there may be others, all of which should be cleared away in subsequent editions.

It remains now only to say a word, and a concluding word, about Mr. Buckmaster's ideal Mode of Meals. It shall be given to Parisina.

"Well, and out of all the bits and scraps, the gutter-pieces, the dust-bin throwings, the lentils, vegetable ends, and so on, how does our good writer order the meals of the day? Ah, I see. He says, 'The

breakfast, being a meal of secondary importance, I shall only say that the remains of the dinner can always be used at the next day's breakfast, by adding eggs, vegetables, fish, or bacon.' Oh, is that new? Is that worthy of school teaching? Is that economy? And then, I see, we are led on to dinners, and we are left. There is nothing else. Only those two meals. As for dinners, instead of excessive cheapness, excessive skill, excessive novelty, we are to have on Monday, soup, beef, rabbit, salad, vegetables, and apples, with butter and sugar; on Tuesday, soup, veal, vegetables or fish, and stewed fruit; on Wednesday, soup, mutton, vegetables or salad, cheese, fruit, or jams; on Thursday . . . but I will read no more, except this on Sunday. It says, 'It is better to have a simple dinner, in order to avoid much cooking.' So the dinner is to be soup, beef, roast chicken with water-cresses, cheese, fruit, or jam. Now, can any one say that this is a whit more simple than the fare for either of the other days? It is simply a pretended bow to Sabbatarians, with firm adherence to good living. I am enraged; I am upset; I am disappointed. I only see one pudding down, too, for all the week. It is on lucky Thursday, when there is sweet mention of cherry. A bill of fare written out by a man, assuredly! No women's palates consulted; no grown or growing-up children! I think as much might have been concocted, without the assistance of Mr. Buckmaster!"

And we agree with Parisina.

THE CURÉ OF ROUTOT.

"I AM not much for priests, I," said Despard, taking a little wisp of tobacco, and a tiny morsel of paper from his pouch, and deftly rolling them into a cigarette; "but there is one of the cloth for whom I have a great respect. He saved the life of myself, and of fifty gallant men. Messieurs, I drink to your good health, and to the health of the brave Curé of Routot!"

A general clinking of glasses ensued, of glasses of every size and shape, from the little gilt liqueur glass, that held as much as a thimble, to a tall goblet that one might have put half a bottle of wine into. There was even a coffee cup among the vessels presented to be "trinqué." Nor were the liquid contents any less varied than their receptacles. There was curaçoa and vermouth, absinthe, good red wine, and brandy that was so-so—in fact, as many

drinks as men. We were all seated about the marble tables of the *Café Lion d'Or*, with its hanging lamps of petrole, and its comptoir hedged about with an irregular palisading of bottles, where mademoiselle sat entrenched, dividing her attention between a little morsel of needlework, an apparently complicated set of account-books, and the requirements and disbursements of her customers. In the middle of the room a great round stove, cased with white enamelled earthenware, diffuses a very moderate degree of warmth. In fact, what with the white stove and the white curtains, and the mirrors, and the marble tables, and the parqueted floor, the general air is rather of chilliness and discomfort to an English eye, when viewed with the accompaniment of howling winds and November rains outside. A glass of "hot grog," and one's feet on a fender in front of a good coal fire, would be more in accordance with your secret wishes. But our companions are content, and so perforce must we be, and we suppress our shiverings as well as we can, and try to enter into the spirit of the hour.

"And pray," we ask as soon as the chinking of goblets has subsided, "what is the history of the *Curé* of Routot, that his name is thus popular?"

Half-a-dozen voices were about to give a voluble explanation, when one of the party, who seemed to hold the position of chairman of the gathering, interposed, and cried in an authoritative voice, "Hold, my children, it is M. Despard who ought to recount to M. l'Anglais the history of that occurrence, as he was himself one of the principal actors." Everyone seemed to acknowledge the justice of this, and, after a moment's polite hesitation, in fear lest he should weary the company, Despard, a short, bullet-headed man, with a close-shaven chin, and huge black moustache, began the following narrative:—

"It was in the disastrous winter of 1870, when Rouen was abandoned, and the outposts of the Prussian army were pushed forward on either bank of the Seine, that I found myself, by the illness of my captain, in command of a company of *Franc-tireurs*, in which I held a commission as lieutenant. I did not desire the responsibility, but there was no help for it. Our corps was detached to observe the progress of the enemy, and we were marching hither and thither, our clothes in tatters, and our shoes worn to nothing. It was tramp, tramp, always tramp, tramp, sleeping under a hedge or

beneath a tree, rarely within the four walls of a house; for shame to say it of my countrymen, but true it is, that every door was shut in our faces by the peasantry. It was only at the point of the bayonet that we could obtain the hospitality of our own countrymen, for they were mortally afraid of the Prussians, whose cruelties to the *Franc-tireurs* and those who harboured them had been rumoured far and wide among the *paysans*.

"Well, I found myself one evening encamped with my company on the borders of the Forest of Bretonne, which, as you know, occupies a peninsula enclosed by the waters of the Seine between Rouen and Havre. It was a country tolerably familiar to me, and my own home was not very far distant; but I dared not visit it—the place was occupied by the Prussians, who were settling themselves comfortably in my chambers and making merry with my wine, whilst I was encamped in a ditch under a tree, wet and hungry, and in a very bad humour. I was stamping up and down and blessing the Prussians in my heart, when I heard the sentry challenge an approaching footstep, and presently a peasant was brought before me who was making his way through the forest, with a stick and a bundle of clothes, in the direction of the river. He was an inhabitant of Routot, he told me, a village about three miles off, and had left his home half an hour before to avoid the Prussians, who had just placed a detachment in occupation of the village. It was a post, it seemed to me, a good way in advance of the general line of the army; and from what I could gather from the countryman, who was a rather intelligent fellow, there were no other Prussian troops within four or five miles of the place.

"All of a sudden it occurred to me that, being in such close proximity to the Prussians, it was my duty to beat up their quarters so as to prevent their resting too comfortably. There was an opportunity to distinguish myself that might never again occur. If by a quick surprise I could capture this Prussian post, the whole country would ring with the exploit, and I should find myself recorded with honour in the annals of my country. The love of glory is with us, monsieur, the most powerful of motives; it burnt as ardently in my breast at that moment as if I had been a youth of twenty or so, and not a grizzled old fellow, the father of a family. And yet the risk was enormous.

The advance of the German armies might at any moment envelope us in its folds, and for us Franc-tireurs, and for me their commander, there was no quarter to be expected, if once we fell into the hands of the Prussians. For myself, I was willing enough to run the risk; but I had no right, perhaps, to risk the lives of my comrades.

"I called my company together, and harangued them in a short speech delivered under the shelter of an oak, whose over-spreading branches still bore a canopy of withered leaves. My men responded to my oration with the unanimous cry, 'Lead us against the Prusse!' To come to a hand-to-hand encounter with these enemies, hitherto known to us only by their destructive missiles, their huge volcanic shells, their monster coups de canon—the thought filled us with exultation. But it was necessary to be circumspect.

"Night was coming on, and a thick mist from the river was spreading itself over the plain. Darkness would soon be upon us, and we had already done a fatiguing day's march. We were even afraid to light a camp fire, lest its light should alarm the enemy and put them on their guard. It was impossible to find our way in the fog and darkness. We must rest as best we could during the darkest hours of the night. By the earliest dawn we would be on the march, and would catch these lazy Prussians in their beds. We detained the young man who had given us the information, to act as our guide in case of need. He was overcome with terror, and earnestly begged us to let him go. He would be shot by the Prussians, he said, if he were caught in our company, and bitterly bemoaned his hard fate. We made rather merry with this young man and his fears, twitted him with his want of patriotism, and promised to place him in the front rank when we delivered our charge upon the Prussians. I never saw a man more abjectly miserable than he. His fear seemed to give him a kind of desperate audacity, and he tried to break away from us; he fought with hands and feet; and when we were finally obliged to tie him up with cords, to prevent further violence, he bit and and gnawed at his bonds like a fox who is caught in a trap.

"During the night the peasant managed to make his escape. I know not how it was; the man who had charge of him, perhaps, took pity on him and kept his eyes shut. I simulated extreme anger; but in reality I was almost glad the poor wretch had got away. To have acted as guide to a company

of Franc-tireurs would have been sufficient to condemn him to speedy death if he had fallen into the hands of our enemies. As for a guide, the spire of a church was visible from a knoll a little beyond our camping-ground.

"At the very first appearance of daylight in the sky, I aroused my men, and we fell silently into column of march, and made our way at the double towards Routot. To possess ourselves of the main street, overpowering the guard, and shooting down the Prussians in detail as they endeavoured to form: this was our plan of operations, and, as far as we were concerned, it was carried out to the letter. We carried the streets of Routot with a rush; there were no defenders visible, and then we called upon the rascally Prussians to come out and surrender; but none responded to the call. The village was sleeping tranquilly when we arrived, but the tramp and bustle of our footsteps and the rattle of our arms must have awakened the sleeping inhabitants. A few heads, here and there, cautiously peering forth from behind the curtains were the only signs of life, however. Every door was kept carefully closed; not a single person came out to salute us.

"At once I established my head-quarters at the little auberge, and called before me the trembling aubergiste. Ah, she knew nothing of the Prussians, she said; they had been here yesterday; but when they went, or where, she knew not. But if monsieur and his gallant comrades would kindly take themselves away, and not expose a poor widow to the vengeance of the Prusse—

"That was the tale everywhere. The whole village seemed completely cowed and frightened, more intent on saving their own skins and paltry household goods than upon the honour of France or the glory of our arms. Struck with sadness at the sight, I yet determined to respect their neutrality as much as possible. Levying a requisition of meat, and bread, and wine for the service of the army, my men made a camp fire in the middle of the street, and breakfasted merrily enough, their hearts cheered by the good meal and wine, and the warmth of sun and fire. But I, who had upon my mind the safety of my command, strolled away from the bivouac and made for the church, with the intention of climbing to the top of the tower and reconnoitring the country around.

"The sacristan was already in the church, preparing to ring the bell for early mass, and he pointed out to me the entrance to

the winding staircase that led to the summit of the tower. The morning was fine and sunny, and the prospect below me was charming. The long reaches of the river sparkling in the sunshine; the wooded hills beyond, tier upon tier; the green pastures, dotted here and there with cattle; the long rows of poplars and willows bordering the river; the dark forest close at hand; and the blue roofs and curling smoke-wreaths of the village just below me. All these were exhibited to my sight like a vast panorama. All was so peaceful and tranquil, that you would have thought it impossible that, among these charming scenes, men were now busily marching to and fro, to compass death and destruction for their fellows. Ah, I said to myself, why, for the sake of emperors and potentates, should honest men like us, and those Germans there—who, perhaps, are honest men too, for that matter—be cutting each other's throats, and knocking each other on the head, this beautiful sunny morning? And then I dismissed these thoughts as incompatible with my duty, and began carefully to scrutinise the country around.

"I could see nothing to excite any misgivings; but a little study of the position showed me why the Prussians had deemed it an object of importance to occupy the village, and had pushed forward an advanced post so far. Five good roads converge upon Routot; which thus resembles somewhat a spider lurking in the middle of its web. My attention was principally confined to the country to the south and east, for it was from those quarters that the Prussian forces were pushing forward. But as I turned round and cast a careless glance on the ground we had lately passed over, I was struck with sudden alarm. Once, twice, I caught sight of a brilliant sparkle of light that danced like a will o' the wisp among the ditches and walls that hemmed about our track, towards the encampment we had quitted at dawn. It was the sparkle of steel—I knew that well enough; and though not a soul was visible, I felt that, surely as death, we were betrayed and surrounded. And next moment I heard a sound equally ominous—the tramp and clatter of cavalry upon two of the converging roads; whilst almost simultaneously there appeared upon a third the dark, spiked helmets of the advanced guard of a regiment of Prussian infantry.

"In the short time that elapsed before I reached the foot of the tower, half a dozen

projects had shaped themselves in my brain. To seize the principal houses and defend them, to cut our way through our enemies, to hold the church and churchyard, which were somewhat capable of defence—all were equally hopeless. We might sell our lives dearly; but there was no chance of eventual escape. As I reached the churchyard, I found it crowded with villagers, who were awaiting the arrival of the curé to begin the mass. They thought, no doubt, that in the church, and attending the holy office, they would find the safety that was so dear to them. At my hasty signal, my company had fallen in, and I addressed them shortly, pointing out that we were surrounded by the enemy, and asking them to sell their lives dearly for the honour of France. 'We shall get no mercy,' I said; 'and better die with arms in our hands than be fusilladed.' At this, there was a murmur from the ranks. 'Perhaps, if we surrender without fighting, they will spare our lives?'

"'I tell you no!' I cried, gnashing my teeth with rage. 'Are you pothouse rascals?'

"At this juncture a young man stepped forward from the ranks. 'Mon capitaine,' he said, 'I have known this place in other days; it is impossible for our enemies entirely to surround us, for there is a marsh between the village and the river which cannot be crossed after the heavy rains we have had. But there is a path known to the inhabitants—a causeway which is now no doubt covered by water. Alas! I do not know the way, but any of the villagers will be able to conduct us.'

"These words put renewed life into my breast. It was the work of a moment for me to spring over the low fence that divides the road from the churchyard, and to address the countrymen gathered in the churchyard.

"'Frenchmen,' I cried, 'a guide is wanted to conduct us through the marsh, and to save your countrymen from the overwhelming forces of the Prussians. Let the one of you best acquainted with the way step forward. It is France requires you.'

"Not one of them stirred. They all hung down their heads and stood clustered together like a flock of sheep.

"'Hasten,' I cried, in a voice tremulous with shame and anger, 'hasten, some one, to volunteer to save your countrymen. What, is it possible! I no longer wish to live, then, since Frenchmen have grown so base.'

"'Listen, monsieur,' cried an old man, stepping forward, a grey-headed old man of some seventy years. 'It is not that we

would not help you if we could, but the Prussians will be among us again in a few moments; if we help you our village will be burnt, ourselves shot, our wives and children driven homeless upon the world; we wish you well, monsieur, but we dare not help you.'

"Even as he spoke I heard a cavalry trumpet ringing loudly in the distance, and the heavy tramp of approaching infantry. For me the agony of the moment was overpowering. I had no doubt of my fate if I were captured. Was I not already known to the Prussians as an active *Franc-tireur*? And to be put out of the way thus, not in battle as a brave man, but shot as a spy or a plunderer! I thought of my wife, of my children, desolate, destitute, and in the hands of our enemies; and then the keen pang of self-reproach that I had led my comrades into this trap, the remorse I felt at my own rashness and want of caution! All these thoughts were intolerable. I almost lost my senses with rage and despair.

"At this moment the curé appeared upon the scene, walking quietly to the church door, his breviary under his arm. Aware of the noise and agitation of the community, he came himself forward, and looked inquiringly towards me. Hastily saluting him, I told him the cruel position in which we were placed.

"'What!' he cried, looking round among his parishioners with lofty surprise, 'is there no one here who will risk his life for the love of God and the sake of his country?'

"He was a fine handsome young man, this Curé of Routot; and as he stood there in his long cassock and biretta, looking down over his people with eager indignant expectation, I thought that I had never seen a nobler looking young fellow in the garb of a priest. But his people stirred not a foot.

"'Give us the mass, mon père,' cried the old man who had spoken before, 'and trouble yourself not with what does not concern you.'

"The priest drew himself up to his full height, and his eyes flashed fire.

"'Yes,' he cried, 'I am a priest; but I am a Frenchman first of all.'

"He flung his book of offices on the ground, twisted up his cassock, and girt it about his loins.

"'Now, mon capitaine,' he cried, seizing me by the arm, 'take me to the head of your column. I will show you the way.'

"We stole away like ghosts, with the priest at our head, and cleared the village just as the head of the Prussian column entered it. A squadron of Uhlans galloped after us, but halted when they saw the ground they would have to cross, and, after exchanging a few shots with us, retired, no doubt, to seek some route by which to cut us off. The party in ambuscade to intercept us, saw nothing of us till we were almost out of range of their rifles, although they were well within reach of our chassepots. So they wisely sounded the retreat, and drew off. Half-an-hour's march brought us to the Seine, where we possessed ourselves of a barge that was anchored in the stream, and floated quietly down the river, till we found ourselves once more within the lines of our own army. The curé was unable to return to his commune, which was in the hands of the Prussians, who would have given him speedy preferment to another world for the share he had in our escape. He had nowhere else to go, and made up his mind to remain with us a clerical *Franc-tireur*. He shared all our fatigues, dangers, and adversities, and proved himself an excellent comrade and good fellow. When peace came, he returned to his duties as curé, not without, I fancy, some little regret."

"And what," we asked, as soon as the buzz of comment and chat that followed the conclusion of Despard's narrative had ceased—"what became of the man who gave the information to the enemy, if he did betray you?"

"Who knows?" said Despard, with a shrug. "Let the past be forgotten, and let us hope that another time France will not be betrayed by her own children."

PAINT AND CANVAS.

VASARI, the historian of painters, has much to say in praise of the "perspective views" or scenes executed by Baldassare Peruzzi, an artist and architect of great fame in his day, who was born in 1480 at Florence or Volterra or Siena, it is not known which, each of these noble cities of Tuscany having claimed to be his birth-place. When the Roman people held high festival in honour of Giuliano de' Medici, they obtained various works of art from Baldassare, including a scene painted for a theatre, so admirably ingenious and beautiful, that very great amazement is said to have been awakened in every beholder. At a later period, when

the Calandra, written by the Cardinal di Bibiena—"one of the first comedies seen or recited in the vulgar tongue"—was performed before Pope Leo, the aid of Baldassare was sought again, to prepare the scenic adornments of the representation. His labours were successful beyond measure; two of his scenes painted upon this or upon some other occasion, Vasari pronounced to be "surprisingly beautiful, opening the way to those of a similar kind which have been made in our own day." The artist was a fine colourist, well skilled in perspective, and in the management of light, insomuch that his drawings did not look "like things feigned, but rather as the living reality." Vasari relates that he conducted Titian to see certain works of Peruzzi, of which the illusion was most complete. The greater artist "could by no means be persuaded that they were simply painted, and remained in astonishment, when, on changing his point of view, he perceived that they were so." Dying in 1536, Baldassare was buried in the Rotondo, near the tomb of Raffaello da Urbino, all the painters, sculptors, and architects of Rome attending the interment. That he was an artist of the first rank was agreed on all hands. And he is further entitled to be remembered as one of the very earliest of great scene-painters.

In England, some six-and-thirty years later, there was born an artist and architect of even greater fame than Peruzzi: Inigo Jones, who, like Peruzzi, rendered important aid to the adornment of the stage. In his youth Inigo had studied landscape-painting in Italy. At Rome he became an architect; as Walpole expresses it, "he dropped the pencil and conceived Whitehall."

Meanwhile a taste, even a sort of passion, had arisen at the English court for masques and pageants of extraordinary magnificence. Poetry, painting, music, and architecture were combined in their production. Ben Jonson was the laureate; Inigo Jones the inventor and designer of the scenic decorations; Lanier, Lawes, and Perabosco contributed the musical embellishments; the king, the queen, and the young nobility danced in the interludes. On these entertainments three to five thousand pounds were often expended, and on more public occasions, ten and even twenty thousand. "It seems," says Isaac Disraeli, "that as no masque writer equalled Jonson, so no 'machinist' rivalled Inigo Jones." For the great architect was wont to busy

himself in devising mechanical changes of scenery, such as distinguishes modern pantomime. Jonson, describing his Masque of Blackness, performed before the court at Whitehall, on Twelfth night, 1605, says, "for the scene was drawn a landscape, consisting of small woods, and here and there a void place, filled with huntings; which falling, an artificial sea was seen to shoot forth, as if it flowed to the land, raised with waves, which seemed to move, and in some places the billows to break, as imitating that orderly disorder which is common in nature." Then follows a long account of the appearance, attire, and "sprightly movements of the masquers." Oceanus, Oceanix, Niger and his daughters, with Tritons, mermaids, mermen, and sea-horses, "as big as the life." "These thus presented," he continues, "the scene behind seemed a vast sea, and united with this that flowed forth, from the termination or horizon of which (being the head of the state, which was placed in the upper end of the hall) was drawn by the lines of perspective, the whole work shooting downwards from the eye, which decorum made it more conspicuous, and caught the eye afar off with a wondering beauty, to which was added an obscure and cloudy night piece, that made the whole set off. So much for the bodily part, which was of Master Inigo Jones's design and art." Indeed, Inigo was not simply the scene-painter; he also devised the costumes, and contrived the necessary machinery; in regard to many of these entertainments, he was responsible for "the invention, ornaments, scenes, and apparitions, with their descriptions;" for everything, in fact, but the music and the words to be spoken or sung.

These masques and court pageants gradually brought moveable scenery upon the stage, in place of the tapestries, "arras cloths," "traverses," or curtains drawn upon rods, which had previously furnished the theatre. Still the masques were to be distinguished from the ordinary entertainments of the public playhouses. The court performances knew little of regular plot, or story; ordinarily avoided all reference to nature and real life; and were remarkable for the luxurious fancifulness and costly eccentricity they displayed. They were provided by the best writers of the time, and in many cases were rich in poetic merit; still they were expressly designed to afford valuable opportunities to the musical composer, to

the ballet dancers, mummers, posture makers, and costumiers. The regular drama, such as the Elizabethan public supported, could boast few attractions of this kind. It was altogether without moveable scenery, although possessed of a balcony or upper stage, used to represent now the walls of a city, as in *King John*, now the top of a tower, as in *Henry the Sixth*, or *Antony and Cleopatra*, and now the window to an upper chamber. Mr. Payne Collier notes that in one of the oldest historical plays extant, *Selimus Emperor of the Turks*, published in 1594, there is a remarkable stage direction demonstrating the complete absence of scenery, by the appeal made to the simple good faith of the audience. The hero is represented conveying the body of his father in a solemn funeral procession to the Temple of Mahomet. The stage direction runs: Suppose the Temple of Mahomet—a needless injunction, as Mr. Collier remarks, if there had existed the means of exhibiting the edifice in question to the eyes of the spectators. But the demands upon the audience to abet the work of theatrical illusion, and with their thoughts to piece out the imperfections of the dramatists, are frequently to be met with in the old plays. Of the poverty of the early stage, in the matter of scenic decorations, there is abundant evidence. Fleckno, in his *Short Discourse of the Stage*, 1664, by which time moveable scenery had been introduced, writes: "Now for the difference between our theatres and those of former times; they were but plain and simple, with no other scenes nor decorations of the stages but only old tapestry, and the stage strewed with rushes."

The simple expedient of writing up the names of the different places, where the scene was laid in the progress of a play, or affixing a placard to that effect upon the tapestry at the back of the stage, sufficed to convey to the spectators the intentions of the author. "What child is there," asks Sir Philip Sidney, "that, coming to a play and seeing *Thebes* written in great letters on an old door, doth believe that it is *Thebes*?" Oftentimes, too, opportunity was found in the play itself, or in its prologue, to inform the audience of the place in which the action of the story is supposed to be laid. "Our scene is *Rhodes*," says old Hieronimo in *Kyd's Spanish Tragedy*, 1588. And the title of

the play was also exhibited in the same way, so that the audience did not lack instruction as to the purport of the entertainment set before them.

The introduction of moveable scenes upon the stage has been usually attributed to Sir William Davenant, who, in 1658, evading the ordinance of 1647, by which the theatres were peremptorily closed, produced, at the Cockpit in Drury Lane, an entertainment rather than a play, entitled "*The Cruelty of the Spaniards in Peru*," expressed by vocal and instrumental music, and by art of perspective in scenes:" an exhibition which Cromwell is generally supposed to have permitted, more from his hatred of the Spaniards, than by reason of his tolerance of dramatic performances. The author of *Historia Histrionica*, a tract written in 1699, also expressly states that "after the Restoration, the king's players acted publicly at the Red Bull for some time, and then removed to a new built play house in Vere Street, by Clare Market; there they continued for a year or two, and then removed to the Theatre Royal in Drury Lane, where they first made use of scenes, which had been a little before introduced upon the public stage by Sir William Davenant." It is to be observed, however, that inasmuch as the masques, such as the court of Charles the First had so favoured, were sometimes produced at the public theatres, and could hardly have been presented there, shorn of the mechanical appliances and changes which constituted a main portion of their attractiveness, moveable scenery, or stage artifices that might fairly be so described, could not be entirely new to a large portion of the public. Thus the masque of *Love's Mistress*, or the *Queen's Masque*, by Thomas Heywood, 1640, was "three times presented before their Majesties at the Phoenix in Drury Lane;" Heywood expressly acknowledging his obligation to Inigo Jones, who "changed the stage to every act, and almost to every scene."

It must not be supposed, however, that the introduction of scenery was hailed unanimously as a vast improvement upon the former condition of the stage. There was no doubt abundance of applause: a sufficient number of spectators were well pleased to find that now their eyes were to be addressed not less than their ears and their minds, and were satisfied that exhibitions of the theatre would be presently much more intelligible to them than had hitherto been the case. Still the sages shook their

heads, distrusting the change, and prophesying evil of it. Even Mr. Payne Collier has been moved, by his conservative regard for the Elizabethan stage and the early drama, to date from the introduction of scenery the beginning of the decline of our dramatic poetry. He holds it a fortunate circumstance for the poetry of our old plays, that "painted moveable scenery" had not then been introduced. "The imagination only of the auditor was appealed to, and we owe to the absence of painted canvas many of the finest descriptive passages in Shakespeare, his contemporaries, and immediate followers." Further, he states his opinion that our old dramatists "luxuriated in passages descriptive of natural or artificial scenery, because they knew their auditors would have nothing before their eyes to contradict the poetry: the hangings of the stage made little pretensions to anything but coverings for the walls, and the notion of the place represented was taken from what was said by the poet, not from what was attempted by the painter."

It need hardly be stated that the absence of scenes and scene-shifting had by no means confined the British drama to a classical form, although regard for "unity of place," at any rate, might seem to be almost logically involved in the immovable condition of the stage fittings. Some two or three plays, affecting to follow the construction adopted by the Greek and Roman stage, are certainly to be found in the Elizabethan repertory, but they had been little favoured by the playgoers of the time, and may fairly be viewed as exceptions proving the rule that our drama is essentially romantic. Indeed, our old dramatists were induced by the absence of scenery to rely more and more upon the imagination of their audience. As Mr. Collier observes, "If the old poets had been obliged to confine themselves merely to the changes that could at that early date have been exhibited by the removal of painted canvas or boarding, we should have lost much of that boundless diversity of situation and character allowed by this happy absence of restraint." At the same time, the liberty these writers permitted themselves did not escape criticism from the devout adherents of the classical theatre. Sir Philip Sidney, in his *Apology for Poetry*, 1595, is severe upon the "defection" nature of the English drama, especially as to its disregard of the unities of time and place. Now, he says, three ladies "walke

to gather flowers, and then we must believe the stage to be a garden; by-and-by we hear news of shipwreck in the same place, and then we are to blame if we accept it not for a rock; upon the back of that comes out a hideous monster, and then the miserable beholders are bound to take it for a cave; while in the meantime two armies fly in, represented with four swords and bucklers, and then what hard heart will not receive it for a pitched field?" Dryden, it may be noted, in his "Essay of Dramatic Poesie" has a kindred passage as to the matters to be acted on the stage, and the things "supposed to be done behind the scenes."

Of the scenery of his time, Mr. Pepys makes frequent mention, without, however, entering much into particulars on the subject. In August, 1661, he notes the reproduction of Davenant's comedy of *The Wits*, "never acted yet with scenes," adding, "and, indeed, it is a most excellent play and admirable scenes." A little later, he records a performance of "Hamlet, Prince of Denmark, done with scenes very well, but, above all, Betterton did the prince's part beyond imagination." It is satisfactory to find that in this case, at any rate, the actor held his ground against the scene-painter. Under another date, he refers to a representation of *The Faithful Shepherdess* of Fletcher, "a most simple thing, and yet much thronged after and often shown; but it is only for the scene's sake, which is very fine." A few years later, he describes a visit "to the king's playhouse all in dirt, they being altering of the stage, to make it wider. But my business," he proceeds, "was to see the inside of the stage, and all the tiring rooms and machines; and, indeed, it was a sight worth seeing. But to see their clothes, and the various sorts, and what a mixture of things there was! Here a wooden leg, there a ruff; here a hobby horse, there a crown, would make a man split himself to see with laughing; and particularly Lacy's wardrobe and Shottrell's. But then, again, to think how fine they show on the stage by candlelight, and how poor things they are to look at too near at hand, is not pleasant at all. The machines are fine, and," he concludes, "the paintings very pretty." In October, 1667, he records that he sat in the boxes for the first time in his life, and discovered that from that point of view "the scenes do appear very fine indeed, and much better than in the pit."

The names of the artists whose works

won Mr. Pepys's applause, have not come down to us. Of Robert Streeter, sergeant-painter to King Charles the Second, there is frequent mention made in the diary of Evelyn, who highly lauds the artist's "very glorious scenes and perspectives," which adorned Dryden's play of the Conquest of Granada, on its representation at Whitehall. Evelyn, not caring much for such entertainments, seems to have frequently attended the plays and masques of the court. In February, 1664, he saw acted The Indian Queen of Sir Robert Howard and Dryden—"a tragedy well written, so beautiful with rich scenes, as the like had never been seen here, or haply (except rarely) elsewhere on a mercenary theatre." At a later date, one Robert Aggas, a painter of some fame, is known to have executed scenes for the theatre in Dorset Garden. Among other scene-painters of distinction, pertaining to a comparatively early period of the art, may be noted Nicholas Thomas Dall, a Danish landscape-painter, who established himself in London in 1760, was long occupied as scene-painter at Covent Garden Theatre, and became an Associate of the Royal Academy in 1771; Hogarth, who is reported to have painted a camp scene for the private theatre of Dr. Hoadley, Dean of Winchester; John Richards, a member of the Royal Academy, who, during many years, painted scenes for Covent Garden; Michael Angelo Rooker, pupil of Paul Sandby, and one of the first Associates of the Academy, who was scene-painter at the Haymarket; Novosielsky, the architect of the Opera House, Haymarket, who also supplied that establishment with many notable scenes, and, to pass over many minor names, De Loutherbourg, Garrick's scene-painter, and one of the most renowned artists of his period.

It will be remembered that Mr. Puff in the Critic giving a specimen of "the puff direct" in regard to a new play, says: "As to the scenery, the miraculous powers of Mr. De Loutherbourg are universally acknowledged. In short, we are at a loss which to admire most, the unrivalled genius of the author, the great attention and liberality of the managers, the wonderful abilities of the painter, or the incredible exertions of all the performers." Shortly after his arrival in England, about 1770, De Loutherbourg became a contributor to the exhibition of the Royal Academy. In 1780 he was elected an Associate; in the following year he obtained

the full honours of academicianship. His easel-pictures were for the most part landscapes, effective and forcible after an unconventional fashion, and wholly at variance with the "classically composed" landscapes then in vogue. Turner when, in 1808, he was appointed Professor of Perspective to the Royal Academy, is said to have taken up his abode at Hammersmith in order that he might be near De Loutherbourg, for whose works he professed cordial admiration. The old scene-painter's bold and strong effects, his daring treatment of light and shade, his system of colour, bright even to gaudiness, probably arrested the attention of the younger artist, and were to him exciting influences. Upon De Loutherbourg's landscapes, however, little store is now placed; but, as a scene-painter, he deserves to be remembered for the ingenious reforms he introduced. He found the scene a mere "flat" of strained canvas extending over the whole stage. He was the first to use "set scenes" and "raking pieces." He also invented transparent scenes with representations of moonlight, sunshine, firelight, volcanoes, &c., and obtained new effects of colour by means of silken screens of various hues placed before the foot and side lights. He discovered, too, that ingenious effects might be obtained by suspending gauzes between the scene and the spectators. These are now, of course, but commonplace contrivances: they were, however, distinctly the inventions of De Loutherbourg, and were calculated to impress the playgoers of his time very signally. To Garrick, De Loutherbourg rendered very important assistance, for Garrick was much inclined to scenic decorations of a showy character, although as a rule he restricted these embellishments to the afterpieces, and for the more legitimate entertainments of his stage was content to employ old and stock scenery that had been of service in innumerable plays. Tate Wilkinson, writing in 1790, refers to a scene then in use which he remembered so far back as the year 1747. "It has wings and flat of Spanish figures at full length, and two folding doors in the middle. I never see those wings slide on but I feel as if seeing my old acquaintance unexpectedly."

Of later scene-painters, such as Roberts and Stanfield, Grieve and Telbin, and to come down to the present time, Beverley and Calcott, Hawes Craven, and O'Connor, there seems little occasion to speak; the

achievements of these artists are matters of almost universal knowledge. It is sufficient to say that in their hands the art they practise has been greatly advanced, even to the eclipse of the efforts of both actors and dramatists. Some few notes, however, may be worth telling in relation to the technical methods adopted by the scene-painter. In the first place, he relies upon the help of the carpenter to stretch a canvas tightly over a frame, or to nail a wing into shape; and subsequently it is the carpenter's duty, with a small sharp saw, to cut the edge of irregular wings, such as representations of foliage or rocks, an operation known behind the curtain as "marking the profile." The painter's studio is usually high up above the rear of the stage—a spacious room, well lighted by means of skylights or a lantern in the roof. The canvas, which is of course of vast dimensions, can be raised to the ceiling, or lowered through the floor, to suit the convenience of the artist, by means of machinery of ingenious construction. The painter has invariably made a preliminary water-colour sketch of his scene, on paper or cardboard. Oftentimes, with the help of a miniature stage, such as school-boys delight in, he is enabled to form a fair estimate of the effect that may be expected from his design. The expansive canvas has been sized over, and an outline of the picture to be painted—a landscape, or an interior, as the case may be—has been boldly marked out by the artist. Then the assistants and pupils ply their brushes, and wash in the broad masses of colour, floods of light, and clouds of darkness. The dimensions of the canvas permit of many hands being employed upon it, and the work proceeds therefore with great rapidity. But the scene-painter is constant in his supervision of his subordinates, and when their labours are terminated, he completes the design with numberless improving touches and masterly strokes. Of necessity, much of the work is of a mechanical kind; scroll-work, patterned walls, or cornices are accomplished by "stencilling" or "pouncing"—that is to say, the design is pricked upon a paper, which, being pressed upon the canvas, and smeared or dabbed with charcoal, leaves a faint trace of the desired outline. The straight lines in an architectural scene are traced by means of a cord, which is rubbed with colour in powder, and, having been drawn tight, is allowed to strike smartly against the canvas, and deposit a distinct mark upon its surface. Duty of this kind

is readily accomplished by a boy, or a labourer of little skill. Scenes of a pantomime order, in which glitter is required, are dabbed here and there by the artist with thin glue; upon these moist places, Dutch metal—gold or silver leaf—is then fixed, with a result that large audiences have never failed to find resplendent and delightful. These are some, but, of course, a few only of the methods and mysteries of the scene-painter's art.

A NARROW ESCAPE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "DENIS DONNE," "NO ALTERNATIVE," &c. &c.

CHAPTER LI. REWARDED.

THE fluent pen, and fervid imagination of the enthusiastic correspondent of *The Cheshire Cat*, had undoubtedly led him away when he described Clement Graham's residence as "princely." It is very pleasant, in its roomy, solid, picturesque, seventeenth century substantiality and respectability; but it is not "princely."

It is well situated, lying midway up a hill that shelters it from the northern blasts, with a fine sweep of wood and water, stretching away to the south of it. The well-cultivated, well-stocked farms that stretch around it, form the Grahams-hill estate, and bring in heavy rents to their owner. The grounds are extensive, well kept up, and remunerative, for Clement Graham makes his head gardener render him a strict account of all the surplus fruit and vegetables. The house is handsomely furnished, with every comfort, but the furniture is neither antique nor modern, "It is just old-fashioned, and nothing more," Charlotte tells herself contemptuously, when she sees it for the first time; and she makes up her mind to supersede it with chattels of her own choice, as soon as possible.

She makes out a mental list of the things for which she has lied, and schemed, and planned, and linked herself to a man she loathes. Her love of luxury, of bright, dainty-coloured elegance, and glittering grandeur has been kept in check all her life, nipped by the biting frost of poverty; but she will fan, and encourage, and indulge it freely now. Full of comfort, full of the evidence of wealth as the house is, there are none of the frail, luxurious superfluities about which she sighs to see as marks of her taste, indications of her rule having commenced.

She arranges her mental list very methodically, and prepares to unfold it

before her husband when they have been settled at Grahamshill for about a week. Just at present she has a plentiful supply of ready money, and the allowance for housekeeping expenses is liberal in the extreme. But nothing has yet been said about her private annual allowance; to the best of her knowledge her husband has not made a will since his marriage; and he has not taken any notice of the hints she has thrown out as to the imminent need she is in of a lady's-maid.

"I shall have all I want," she tells herself, "but it would be more gracious on his part if he gave them to me without my asking for them; however, he will soon learn to anticipate my wishes—and how unpleasant it will be for him if he fails to supply them."

She tells herself this with an exultant throbbing in her heart. The woman who has borne poverty, dependence, privation, humiliation so placidly, determines to be revenged on her former fate now. She resolves upon being envied, admired, courted, copied, exalted! She resolves also upon eventually snubbing all those who are powerless, who may so envy, admire, court, copy, and exalt her.

Before she can set about her noble mission, it is necessary for her to gauge exactly the extent of her influence over her husband, and over her husband's purse. She believes both to be unlimited, at any rate she fully intends stretching the limits to the utmost.

It is easy enough to incline him to parade himself, and his riches, and his handsome, well dressed wife, about the neighbourhood, in order the more fully to display them. But when it comes to the question of making a return for these hospitalities, the old Adam crops up, and Mr. Clement Graham avows that he does not see the necessity for "doing anything of the kind yet." Directly the propriety of his opening his own portals is suggested to him, he begins to sigh for a little quiet, and finds out that "late hours do not agree with his health." Being uncertain of her ground still, and finding that he holds the purse-strings, that they will not relax unless at his free will and pleasure, and that the servants are unable to order anything "unless master checks the order," the mistress of Grahamshill finds herself compelled to relinquish the grand series of dinner parties and at homes, by means of which she had designed to glorify herself, and to popularise her reign at Grahamshill.

At first there is variety enough in being driven about in a well appointed carriage, for the woman whose career has been so monotonous. But after a while, even the belief that people are pointing her out as the lady whose beauty made Mr. Graham false to his vows to another woman, palls upon her. It is dull work, lunching, and dining, and spending the long winter evenings alone with a man who has not an idea in his head, or a good feeling in his heart. If he were only a clever demon she thinks she could tolerate him better; and if he were an amiable fool she really might become fond of him, in this solitude. But he is neither of these things, and gradually she comes to hate him, and to be weary of her existence.

It is useless reminding him of his promise that she should taste the joys of foreign travel. He has had enough of it himself, and, now that he no longer wants to bait his trap with promises, he openly announces that he has no intention of "bothering himself and upsetting his household" by breaking up his establishment again. "You're placed here now, and precious well placed too," he reminds her, "and you must make yourself as well contented as you can; at any rate I've no intention of taking you away."

"Not even to London?" she asks sulkily one day, and he tells her "No, he had enough of London while he was philandering after Gertrude Forest; but that she can go up, if she likes to go and stay with her brother."

Now to go and stay with her brother—to breathe the same atmosphere which she was obliged to breathe while she was in bondage—is a course against which all Charlotte's nature revolts. She dislikes a good many of her fellow creatures, but she hates her sister-in-law. "To be in that woman's house again would be purgatory to me," she says to herself; "but to be in luxurious little lodgings near her, to mortify her day by day with the contrast between 'then and now' would be paradise."

But until all is settled, until she has clearly ascertained what will be the state of her funds, she dare not openly proclaim her sentiments on the subject to Mr. Graham. For the latter has developed in domesticity one of those carping, fault-finding, disagreeable spirits that crows a whole household, and makes every other human being under his roof-tree nearly sacrifice their rights of humanity, rather than "put out" the ruling evil genius.

"There will be my four hundred a year

pin-money, but of course you will make me some extra private allowance for the month or two I am in town?" she says to her husband one morning, and his answer is not auspicious.

"We will talk about your 'pin-money,' as you call it, by-and-by; but why the devil you calculate on having four hundred a year to squander on your private follies, I don't understand," he answers, peevishly.

She feels that now the tug of war between the lesser mind and her own is coming, and she moves very warily.

"You spoke of that sum as the allowance you intended making your wife, Clement," she says, temperately. "When I took Gertrude's place, I thought that I took upon myself all the responsibilities and privileges with which she was to have been endowed. I know very well that you will never grudge me anything, and you know very well that I shall never abuse your confidence; therefore, if you object to the stated sum as being too matter-of-fact an arrangement between us, husband and wife as we are, let me have a few blank signed cheques, and then you will have no more trouble about my little personal expenses?"

"It's no use your trying your canting and carneying on me," he answers roughly, "if you're such an affectionate wife as you pretend to be, why the devil don't you stay here with me, instead of wanting to go and have a shine in town without me? As to allowing you four hundred a year, I'll see you—"

He checks himself, and grunts by way of finishing the sentence, and she puts in tremblingly—for all the happiness she can ever taste in life while this rough master of hers lives, is in the balance—

"What will you let me have for my own, then, Clement dear? I ought to know, for it will trouble you if I have to come to you for every penny I shall be compelled to spend, in order to present myself fittingly before the world as your wife."

She says it all deprecatingly, meekly, rather sweetly in fact, for she hopes to move him, by a betrayal of her own sense of her utter inability to help herself, to a more generous frame of mind. She does not quite realise as yet that she is dealing with a nature that is even lower than her own. The touch of helplessness, the crowning appeal, will not help her here.

"You can present yourself before the world as my wife very fittingly on fifty pounds a year," he says, with a little snigger, that does away with every particle

of conscience she has in the matter of "doing him" in the future. "Remember, my dear, how much less you had to live and dress on, when I saw you first, and just reflect what a very respectable appearance you can make on fifty pounds a year!"

"Oh, Clement," she cries, becoming genuine for once in her astonishment and pain, "you can't mean it, you don't mean it. Think of the house of which I am mistress; think of the jewels you have given me, and ask yourself, How can I clothe myself in a way that will befit either of them, for such a paltry sum?"

"Oh! make your mind at rest on that point," he says, carelessly; "I mean to pull in the expenditure of the house pretty considerably. And as for the jewels, why I have thought over it; you won't have many of them to consider, for they're unbecoming to your station, and to the manner of life I've decided upon living here, and so I shall dispose of them again."

He looks at her askance as he speaks, and she dare not rise up and defy him, nor dare she urge that he has brought her to this pass by false pretences, for the pretences on her side have been even falser. In that hour they come to a clear understanding with each other, and they are not elevated in one another's estimation. He has the power and the purse, but she has the cunning and the credulity of a fool to deal with. "I'll get what I want, however I get it," she says to herself; while he says, "I'll know how every penny that woman spends goes. She had little enough before she knew me; what can she want with more for herself now?"

There is a fierce battle over the vexed question of her going to London, or rather over the way in which she shall go. She will not go to her brother's house, and she will not agree without a struggle to her husband's other proposition, namely that she shall send all her bills in to him, if she goes into lodgings. She desires to be free, to be free to flaunt herself, in a way that she imagines will be painful, before the eyes of those against whom she cherishes a degree of vindictiveness for which she herself cannot account. She is only conscious of this one fact, that she is a disappointed woman, and she longs with all the force of the feminine longing within her, to wreak her vengeance for her disappointment upon somebody.

In her impotent rage she acknowledges to herself, and declares to him, that she has bartered and degraded herself for nothing. He is neither angered nor softened by the

confession. "To tell the truth," he says, with his irritatingly small laugh, "he has suspected something of the sort all along; he has been prepared to find out that she was trying to trick him, and it is as well she should understand now that he has seen through her from the first."

In her powerlessness she is obliged to confess to herself that she cannot alter this. She is compelled to dwell here in this well-to-do obscurity which has become odious to her (for even the local papers have given her up), with the knowledge impressed upon her mind, and upon the minds of all the household, that she is not of as much importance at Grahamshill as are the upper servants. They at least have the power of being extravagant in their several departments. But she is debarred even from this dubious luxury, for if she indulges in it, intuition tells her that she will have to pay for it out of her fifty pounds a year.

Grahamshill is a far grander goal than any she had ever hoped to gain before that unlucky day on which Mrs. Grange, her sister-in-law, "took her up" with a well-understood purpose. At the same time, Grahamshill, grand as it is, is not what she bargained for. She panted for freedom, and she has procured servitude of the lowest description.

She makes two or three efforts to free herself from the thralldom that is so infinitely irksome to her—efforts that are ignoble in themselves and that tend towards an ignoble end. Mean as he is, unmanly as he is, unworthy as he cannot fail to feel himself to be, her husband does desire to maintain a certain status of respectability in the county in which, by right of his landed property and wealth, he has a certain influence. In learning this fact, she learns, also, that she has a hold upon him; for she is aware that he has bachelor secrets which, as a well-reputed landowner, he would desire to keep from the light of day.

It matters little to Charlotte that she can never discover what these secrets actually are by fair means; she is quite ready to try foul. It matters little to her the knowledge that any moral degradation which may befall him will be visited upon his children—if he has any. The woman who has retained her good looks by means of the placidity with which she has re-

garded every evil that has not immediately affected herself, says now, "Let the next generation look after itself. If I can bend him to my will without exposing him, I'll do it; if I can't, I'll expose him. He would not serve me more gently."

The correspondent who has told in *The Cheshire Cat* the tale of the handsome Mrs. Graham's reception at Grahamshill and in the neighbourhood, is defrauded of the opportunity of narrating some rather sensational events that occur at that "princely residence" during the ensuing months. Only the well-esteemed master of that place knows that he has detected his wife, in the act of rifling his private papers by means of a duplicate key to his secretary, when she believed him to be in bed and asleep. Only the wife knows, through the mediumship of these papers, that she is in a spurious position; and that the title of Mrs. Clement Graham belongs by right to a poor, forlorn, abandoned, helpless, good girl, who believes in Clement Graham still, who is left to her own devices in a miserably uncomfortable home with her brother, a farmer, in Canada. From the moment that she makes this discovery, and is discovered in making it by the bigamist, Charlotte Graham submits to every condition he desires, preferring rather her state of shame and ignominy, which is unknown to the world, to the open hurling down which would be her portion, if she dared be true to a decent womanly impulse and expose him.

The picture of what that life at Grahamshill will be flashes itself vividly before us, and will be painted. We can see the pair, between whom there is neither legal nor love-tie, growing older in each others' enforced companionship. We can see the unhappy children of this evil union, passing from childhood to years of understanding, in an atmosphere that is composed of eternal threatenings and false re-alliances. We can hear the bitter reproaches that only such a man and woman can utter to one another—the cowardly taunt met by the fierce, half-maddened retort—the unfeeling indifference that can bear the sight of any pain, simply because that pain is powerless to hurt it.

But we can never know how much remorse is felt by either of these people for that which they have brought on one another, and on the children who are innocent.

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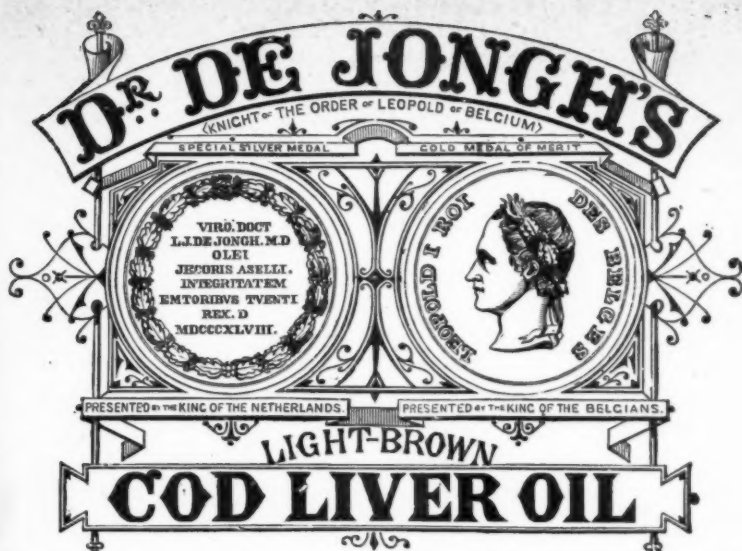
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